# ASSEMBLY, No. 2157

# **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

# 219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by: Assemblyman RAJ MUKHERJI District 33 (Hudson)

## **SYNOPSIS**

Appropriates \$12 million in constitutionally dedicated CBT revenues for preservation, restoration, and revitalization of Jersey City Reservoir property for recreation and conservation and historic preservation purposes.

# **CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



## A2157 MUKHERJI

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1	AN ACT appropriating \$12 million in constitutionally dedicated
2	corporation business tax revenues to fund the preservation,
3	restoration, and revitalization of Jersey City Reservoir property
4	for recreation and conservation and historic preservation
5	purposes.
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7	BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State

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**BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

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- 1. a. (1) There is appropriated to the Department of Environmental Protection from the revenue derived from the tax imposed pursuant to the "Corporation Business Tax Act (1945)," P.L.1945, c.162 (C.54:10A-1 et seq.), and dedicated to recreation and conservation, farmland preservation, and historic preservation purposes pursuant to subparagraph (a) of Article VIII, Section II, paragraph 6 of the State Constitution the sum of \$12,000,000 for the purpose of providing a grant to assist the local government unit identified in paragraph (2) of this subsection to develop lands for recreation and conservation purposes and historic preservation purposes as described in that paragraph.
- (2) The following project is eligible for funding with the moneys appropriated pursuant to this section:

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT	COUNTY	PROJECT	APPROVED AMOUNT
Jersey City	Hudson	Jersey City Reservoir Preservation, Restoration, and Revitalization Project	\$12,000,000

TOTAL \$12,000,000

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- b. Any transfer of any funds, or change in project sponsor, site, or type, listed in this subsection shall require the approval of the Joint Budget Oversight Committee or its successor.
- c. As used in this section, "develop," "historic preservation purposes," and "recreation and conservation purposes" mean the same as those terms are defined in section 3 of P.L.1999, c.152 (C.13:8C-3).

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2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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#### **STATEMENT**

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This bill would appropriate \$12,000,000 to the Department of Environmental Protection to provide a grant to Jersey City to develop the Jersey City Reservoir site, which is owned by the city, for recreation and conservation and historic preservation purposes.

## A2157 MUKHERJI

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These funds are appropriated from corporation business tax revenues dedicated to recreation and conservation, farmland preservation, and historic preservation purposes pursuant to subparagraph (a) of Article VIII, Section II, paragraph 6 of the State Constitution.

The project to be funded by this bill consists of the preservation, 6 7 restoration, and revitalization of the historic Jersey City Reservoir 8 in Hudson County for recreation and conservation and historic 9 Originally built in 1871 - 1874, the preservation purposes. 10 reservoir is currently a beautiful lake in the center of the Heights 11 section of Jersey City. Since being discontinued as a source of 12 drinking water, the area has been reclaimed by nature. Closed in 13 with high stone walls, this "hidden jewel" is a stunning example of 14 wildlife in this very urban area, with great blue herons, swallows, 15 peregrine falcons, and numerous other birds using the area. 16 Wildflower meadows, oak, cherry, apple, and birch trees, and 17 emerging wetlands surround a large lake at this peaceful 14-acre 18 site. The circa 1874 Egyptian Revival walls and Romanesque 19 pump-houses are of major historic significance to Jersey City and 20 the region.

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In 2012, the "Jersey City Reservoir 2 and 3 Complex" was listed in the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places. The funding provided by this bill would be used to preserve, develop, and maintain the reservoir as an historic site and public urban park for passive recreation. It would be also used to preserve the stone walls and related structures of "Reservoir #3," and establish the site, bounded by Central, Jefferson, and Summit Avenues, and Pershing Field Park, as a public historic and nature park, botanical sanctuary, and wildlife habitat. The funding will further protect the lake, woods, meadows, and the entire reservoir site from new building construction and any use inconsistent with a passive recreation park.

Originally started in 2002 by a group of concerned citizens, the Jersey City Reservoir Preservation Alliance, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, has been working to protect and preserve the Jersey City Reservoir site, and secure public and private support for developing and maintaining the property as an historic and passive recreation site.